

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicants amended the claims to obviate the Examiner's rejections under §112. The amended claims recite metes and bounds of the invention clearly and definitely. The subject matter of claim 5 was incorporated into claim 1.

Heavy duty laundry detergent compositions have for many years contained an anionic sulphonate or sulphate surfactant, for example, linear alkylbenzene sulphonate (LAS) or primary alcohol sulphate (PAS), as the principal detergent-active ingredient. These anionic and anionic/nonionic surfactant systems are robust and highly efficient on a wide range of soils and under a wide range of conditions, for example, temperature and water hardness. However, the anionic surfactants are not noted for mildness to skin. The milder surfactants used to formulate products intended for prolonged skin contact, for example, shampoos and shower gels, would not perform adequately in heavy duty laundry detergent compositions because of insufficient interaction with fatty materials occurring as soil. It is possible substantially to increase the mildness to skin of a laundry detergent composition containing an anionic sulphonate or sulphate detergent and a conventional detergent ethoxylated nonionic surfactant, without detriment to detergency performance, for example, by increasing the proportion of nonionic surfactant in the system, or by incorporating low levels of certain cosurfactants. While real mildness benefits can be achieved by these means, it is not easy to communicate the concept to the consumer. The present inventors now propose that the message can be reinforced by the incorporation of aloe vera, an ingredient strongly associated in the mind of the consumer with skin benefits. See page 1, line 11 – page 2, line 19 of the specification.

The present amendment incorporates the subject matter of claims and thus renders the rejections over of SU 1707058 and Vermeer (US Patent 5,880,076) moot, since claim 5 was not rejected over these references.

Claims 1 – 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masschelein et al., (PG Pub. No. US 2002/0103094), hereinafter “Masschelein”.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Masschelein does not disclose compositions comprising a minor amount of aloe vera. Applicants particularly call the Examiner’s attention to claim 3, which recites extremely low amounts of aloe vera. Applicants’ claims 17 and 18 are even further removed from Masschelein. Masschelein does not disclose laundry detergent compositions comprising specifically tailored, mild surfactant system (containing mild co-surfactants which are specifically selected from alkylpolyglycosides and/or highly ethoxylated nonionics), and then combining the specifically selected surfactant systems with ultra low amounts of aloe vera. Masschelein does not address the problem of communicating to the consumer the mildness benefit of specifically tailored surfactant systems. It is not seen how one of ordinary skill in the art, who has not had the benefit of hindsight afforded by the present specification, would have been led by Masschelein to select specific surfactant system and then combine it with ultra low (rather than relatively high) amounts of aloe vera. One of ordinary skill in the art seeking mild laundry detergent compositions would have been logically motivated to include higher amounts of aloe vera, known for its skin mildness benefits. Applicants’ invention provides the advantage that the formulation is cheaper than formulations with high amount of aloe vera, yet it has skin mildness properties associated with the high amount of aloe vera because of the presence of skin mild surfactants. It is the combination of aloe vera and skin mild surfactants which give both the mildness benefit and the communication benefit to the consumer. Consequently, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In light of the availability of Terminal Disclaimer practice, applicants agree to filing of the Terminal Disclaimer upon an indication of allowable subject matter.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be allowed to issue.

If a telephone conversation would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the present application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rimma Mitelman", written over a horizontal line.

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